

Civic Engagement

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Utah State Office of Education
Life Skills, Academic Service Learning



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There is no reason
to believe that
there is one law for
families and another
for nations.

-Mahatma Gandhi

Civic and Character Education in Utah Schools

Civic Education is a predominant theme in all areas of public school education in Utah. The recently adopted Life Skills document outlines the state's goals for education. It advocates in its preface that

"...students become productively engaged citizens endowed with the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and confidence to participate fully in democratic life. It is our hope that students will be active participants in and out of the classroom in American citizenship, with many of the same values, dreams and goals of the founding fathers for free, responsible, productive, and happy living."

The National Council on Social Studies has identified 4 major themes of social studies, which are: (1) global interconnectedness, (2) continuity and change over time, (3) governance, and (4) rights and responsibilities. These are reemphasized in social studies classes throughout the k-12 curriculum. They provide a framework for the study of democracy.

Specific courses explore them in greater depth. A listing of core social studies classes follows:

- 4th grade Utah Studies
- 5th grade..... United States Studies
- 6th grade..... World Studies
- 7th grade..... Utah Studies
- 8th grade.... United States History I
- 10th grade... World Civilizations and Geography for Life
- 11th grade... United States History II
- 12th grade... United States Government and Citizenship

Students in these courses closely examine the core documents that prepare them for full civic participation. The 12th grade course in citizenship particularly focuses on American ideals such as representative democracy, the Constitution and the rule of law, levels of government, civic rights and responsibilities, majority rule, and the free enterprise system. The social studies core may be found on the website at <http://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/socialstudies/core/default.htm>.

Academic Service Learning, passed by Board resolution in 2004, advocates

involvement of all students in curriculum-connected service to the community. Such service promotes the common good, and encourages participation with community partners. Students involved in this practice have numerous opportunities to build character as they work together to solve community issues. The State Board of Education encourages Academic Service Learning implementation in every curriculum, and affects thousands of Utah students through service learning grants from Learn and Serve America.

Life Skills is a statewide program that encourages teachers to educate the whole child. Character is one of the seven domains in the Life Skills document. Utah educators are active in the teaching of honesty, integrity, morality, civility, duty, honor, service, and obedience to law as specified by Utah Code 53A-13-109. Another Life Skills domain is Social and Civic Responsibility. Character development and civic engagement are emphasized as students pursue academic achievement. Utah schools focus on student knowledge, skills and dispositions for civic engagement that are molded and developed in all areas of the school. These are fundamental in order to teach children so that they can make informed decisions and become competent, well educated citizens with a commitment to the common good in democratic society. All Utah secondary schools must provide evidence of Life Skills integration as they meet requirements for state accreditation. The Life Skills document may be found online at <http://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/lifeskills>

Many districts and schools throughout the state have adopted civic and character education programs that complement the school's mission. Among these is the "We the People" project that emphasizes student knowledge of the Constitution. Utah's Mock Trial competition gives students hands-on experience with the judicial system.

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Mock Election and Project Citizen give them practical civic experience in voting procedures and community problem solving. Hundreds of Utah teachers have been trained in the essentials of the first amendment through the 3Rs program. As a result, Utah has four First Amendment Schools. Many schools have also initiated whole-school character education programs.

State Office specialists continue to meet with a wide variety of civic organizations to co-sponsor and collaborate on activities for students and teachers. Among these organizations are the Utah Coalition for Civic, Character and Service Learning, the Utah Commission on Volunteers, the Utah Federation for Youth, Power in You, and the Utah Courts Outreach program. It is hoped that such collaborative work will result in the development of school and community partnerships and in civically engaged students that are knowledgeable about community resources.

These efforts are designed to provide multiple opportunities for students to obtain knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will lead them to meaningful, participatory citizenship. It is the responsibility of all teachers, administrators, and staff to model the ideals of citizenship and seek evidence of student civic engagement.

-Alan Griffin



Make a Difference Day

Make A Difference Day is the largest national day of helping others - a celebration of neighbors helping neighbors. Everyone can participate. The next event is Saturday, October 27, 2007. Learn how to get involved at www.usaweekend.com/diffday/.

Here are some ideas from the Effective Practices Collection to help get you started.

Planning the logistics of a volunteer service project
http://snipurl.com/EPC_4836

Volunteering by, in, and with low-income communities
http://snipurl.com/EPC_840

Providing childcare to increase participation in neighborhood events
http://snipurl.com/EPC_1007

Collaborating to develop service programming to address community needs
http://snipurl.com/EPC_857

Generating a list of 100 ways teens can serve their communities
http://snipurl.com/EPC_780

Matching the right volunteer with the right assignment
http://snipurl.com/EPC_539

Check out The BR!CK Awards, dubbed by CNN as "the Oscars of youth service awards."

The BR!CK Award celebrates individuals age 25 and under who are leading significant and measurable social change to make the world better. Please help me get the word out so that young world-changers can get the support and recognition they deserve.

Winners have a shot at \$100,000 in community grants and scholarships. One winner established a mobile clinic providing on-site physician care, free education, and heart disease and cancer screenings to underserved minorities and immigrants. Another winner advocated for the rights of mentally ill incarcerated persons.

The deadline for applications is December 31, 2007, and all applicants must be permanent residents or citizens of the U.S. or Canada. For more information and to apply online please visit

www.brickawards.com or http://www.dosomething.org/brick_application_guide

Any other inquiries can be sent to brick@dosomething.org

Help us recognize those who are actively influencing their communities positively.

Please share with others and direct all questions to brick@dosomething.org

Dialogue on Democracy

This year's Dialogue on Democracy will feature Lee Hamilton, a former congressman and participant in the 9-11 Commission and the Iraq Study Group. Hamilton will address teachers and civic representatives at a dinner at Rice-Eccles Stadium on the night of October 30, 2007.

Teachers are also invited to attend a session at 10:15 a.m. on that day in Room 155F of the Salt Palace at UEA, where they will be addressed by the Honorable Christine M. Durham, Chief Justice of the Utah Supreme Court, and introduced to teaching resources available through the Utah Coalition for Civic, Character and Service Learning.

Funding is available to sponsor teachers at the Dialogue on Democracy dinner. To apply, please call or e-mail Elaine Jones at the State Office at (801) 538-7977, or elaine.jones@schools.utah.gov. The event promises to be an up-close experience with local and national civic leaders who can provide expertise in political ideas to be taken back to the classroom.

America's Promise Alliance Launches 2008 100 Best Communities for Young People Competition

The America's Promise Alliance (<http://www.americaspromise.org/>) and Capital One (<http://www.capitalone.com/>) have announced the launch of the 2008 100 Best Communities for Young People Competition with an official call for entries from communities across the United States that are the best places for young people to live and grow up. Winners will range from large urban cities to small rural towns.

The winning communities will be announced in late January 2008. In addition to the possibility of becoming a 100 Best Community, all applicants will be eligible to apply for a total of \$300,000 in grants from the Alliance. (Applications for the 2008 grant program will be accepted in early February 2008.)

Winning communities will be featured prominently on the Alliance's Web site, in the Alliance's weekly newsletter, and as part of national and local media materials. They will also be given the opportunity to participate in the Alliance's Regional Best Practice Forums, where their programs and policies will serve as a model for other cities and towns across the country. Furthermore, all winning communities are invited and provided a partial stipend to attend the Alliance's National Forum and Celebration held every fall in Washington, D.C.

Deadline: November 2, 2007

More info.:

<http://www.americaspromise.org/APAPage.aspx?id=8058&terms=best+communities+for+young+people>

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The Dirksen Congressional Center

During The Dirksen Center's annual Congress in the Classroom workshop -- http://www.dirksencenter.org/print_programs_CongressClassroom.htm -- participants are asked to introduce the lesson plans, resources, and techniques that have proven successful in teaching about Congress in their classrooms. A 2006 participant, Ellen Fox, Ridgefield High School, Ridgefield, CT, presented her lesson entitled, "Congressional Power, Organization, The Differences Between The House And The Senate - Criticisms Then & Now."

Background information for this lesson follows:

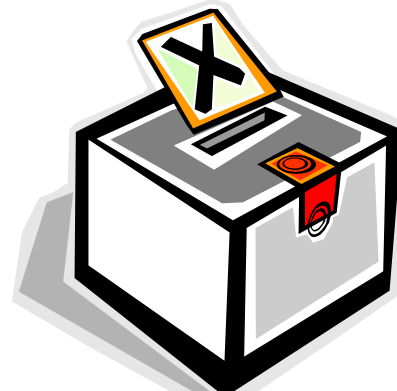
In Federalist No. 51 Madison wrote, "In a Republican government, the legislative authority necessarily predominates. The remedy for this inconvenience is to divide the legislature into different branches." The Framers of the Constitution took great care in organizing the legislative branch of the United States government into a bicameral system to avoid overpowering the other two branches. There are distinct differences between congressional power and organization of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

In this lesson, students will discuss among their group why the Framers chose to organize the legislative branch of the U.S. government in the manner that they did. Find "Congressional Power, Organization, The Differences Between The House And The Senate - Criticisms Then & Now" at: http://www.congresslink.org/print_lp_congpower_org_diff.htm.

We hope you find this lesson useful!

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2008 Utah Schools of Character Application Deadline: December 3, 2007 postmarked

The Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Center for Community of Caring announces the upcoming December 3rd deadline for the Utah Schools of Character award. You will find all the documents needed for your application process on the Community of Caring website. Simply go to the Community of Caring web page www.communityofcaring.org and click on the Utah State School of Character blue school house where you will find several resources.

Many states including Utah are now conducting State School of Character (SSOC) competition as a preliminary step to advancing to the Character Education Partnership's (CEP) National awards program. The Utah Schools of Character program is endorsed by the Utah State Office of Education. If your school or district is located in Utah, you must apply directly to the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Center for Community of Caring, not CEP.

Every year, CEP names 10 public and private schools and districts (K-12) as National Schools of Character (NSOC) for their outstanding work in character education. The Utah School of Character winner will advance to the National School of Character award competition. In 2008, winning NSOC schools and districts will receive a \$20,000 award.

We hope that you will review the enclosed information and seriously consider applying the SSOC award. For more information about the Utah Schools of Character awards program, contact Penny Keith at pkeith@communityofcaring.org.

FASD Parent & Educator Seminar

The Fetal Alcohol Coalition of Utah is sponsoring a free, day-long seminar for parents and educators on Saturday, November 3, 2007 at the Horizonte School, 1234 S. Main Street, Salt Lake City. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m., with the sessions beginning at 9:00.

Students with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder are not easily identified, but often display hyperactivity, judgment and reasoning difficulties, poor motor skills, behavioral disabilities, and other symptoms. Many of these students have extreme difficulties becoming successful citizens in society.

The seminar features many professionals who will teach strategies for successful interventions with these students. Deb Evensen, M.A., a teacher and behavior specialist from Alaska will keynote the conference, and sessions will feature Dr. Susan Lewin, Dr. Mary Hales, Melissa Genauz, Barbara Sirkin, and Karen Greenwell.

This seminar promises to be excellent. It is free, and interested parties may contact Shelley Riley (801-393-8671 or email Shelley@casutah.org) to get registered. Teacher relicensure points will be available. Participants need to sign up by October 25, 2007.



The [Center for Regional and National Security \(CeRNS\)](http://www.cerns.org) at Eastern Michigan University initiated a grant funded pilot project from Michigan Citizen Corp to develop, validate and initiate an education program targeting high school students teaching Disaster Preparedness and Response. The Teen Community Emergency Response Team (Teen CERT) Program educates students about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, Teen CERT members can assist others in their schools, neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. Teen CERT members are also encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

The core Teen CERT program has three main goals. First, it will seek to provide students with a knowledge base on the effects of natural and man-made disasters and their emotional, social, and economic impacts. Second, it will aim to build decision-making and problem solving skills and strategies to help students make informed decisions regarding readiness, response and recovery, and mitigation efforts to reduce loss of life and property. Third, an integral part of the Teen CERT program will be to provide students with hands-on training using reality-driven drills and exercises.

The Utah Commission on Volunteers and Eastern Michigan University are bringing a free, three day training to Provo, Utah, November 29 – December 1. Each attendee will receive a free CERT backpack and every school starting a Teen CERT program will receive 25 backpacks for their students and a \$250 start-up grant. For more information on Teen CERT, visit www.teencert.org. For more information on attending this very important training, please contact Lani Nisbet, Utah Citizen Corps Program Manager, Utah Commission on Volunteers at lnisbet@utah.gov



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The Elephant and the Wolves

A Fable about Bullying for 7th Graders

The wolves at the zoo loved to tease the other animals. One night after the zoo closed, they escaped their enclosure, and spent the evening tormenting different creatures. "Look at the giraffe's long neck and spots—they look ridiculous!" "Look at the penguins' funny walk—they'd never make it in the woods where we're from!" Then they stopped at the elephant's cage. "His nose! His ears! His wrinkly skin!" The wolves spent the remaining hours until dawn mocking the elephant. The elephant suffered the indignity patiently and in silence. When morning came, the zookeepers found the wolves out, and decided to move the wolves to a new, more secure cage—next to the elephant.

A few weeks passed, and the wolves took every opportunity to tease their new neighbor. Early one morning, before the zoo opened, there was a fire in the wolves' cage. Help us!" they cried. The elephant waves his enormous ears to try and put out the flames, but they just grew more intense. The wolves howled in fear. The elephant drank up a trunk full of water, pushed through the bars of his cage, and extinguished the fire. Their fur singed and smoking, the wolves panted, "Why did you help us? We were so mean to you."

The elephant replied, "Compassion has brought me more than cruelty—along with a big nose and big ears, I have a big heart."

Written by Quinn Rollins, Rosemary Baron, Barry Borduc, Mark Catmull, Pat Daskalas, Dawn Hauser, Robert Lindsay, and Glen Loveland



Great Web Sites:

Justice Talking — A public radio program about law and American Life <http://justicetalking.org/>

Teaching Tolerance — <http://www.tolerance.org>

CIVNET – Civic Education all over the world - <http://www.civnet.org/>

Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools — <http://www.civicmissionofschools.org/>

The Utah State Office of Education does not sponsor nor endorse any of the listed sites, but merely suggests them as resources to be used under the careful guidance of a qualified instructor.

USOE Websites:

Character Ed — http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/curr/char_ed/default.htm

Civics — <http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/curr/civics/index.htm>

Service Learning — <http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/curr/servicelearning/index.htm>

Life Skills — <http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/curr/civics/lifeskills/index.htm>